

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 PC-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01 /127 W
----- 008609

R 162133Z JUL 74

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9427

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 4194

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT

SUBJ: GOC-PDC EXCHANGE SURFACED

REF: SANTIAGO 3325

1. SUMMARY. GOC PRESS OFFICE RELEASED TEXT OF TOUGH LETTERS EXCHANGED BETWEEN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (PDC) PRESIDENT PATRICIO AYLWIN AND FORMER INTERIOR MINISTER BONILLA FOLLOWING IMPOSITION LAST MONTH OF PRIOR CENSORSHIP ON PARTY RADIO STATION. RELEASE SUGGESTS STRAINS BETWEEN PARTY AND GOVERNING JUNTA HAVE MOVED SIGNIFICANTLY IN DIRECTION OF OPEN BREAK. END SUMMARY.

2. PRIOR CENSORSHIP WAS IMPOSED JUNE 7 ON SANTIAGO ANCHOR STATION RADIO PRESIDENTE BALMACEDA OF PDC NETWORK AND POLITICAL COMMENTARIES OF PARTY IDEOLOGUE JAIME CASTILLO WERE BARRED (REFTEL). AYLWIN WROTE LETTER OF PROTEST TO GENERAL OSCAR BONILLA, THEN INTERIOR MINISTER, ON JUNE 12 CONDEMNING ACTION AS "UNJUST, DISCRIMINATORY, ARBITRARY, INJURIOUS OF FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT AND MANIFESTLY CONTRARY TO PRINCIPLES OF EQUITY AND NATIONAL UNITY EXPRESSED BY THE GOVERNMENT." LETTER ASSERTS THAT CONCEPTS SET OUT BY CASTILLO ARE CONSONANT WITH PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN HUMANISM ESPOUSED BY GOVERNING JUNTA AND REFLECT THINKING OF LARGE NUMBER OF CHILEANS WHO CANNOT BE IGNORED BY AUTHORITIES. COOPERATION IS NOT TO BE EQUATED WITH SILENT
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ASSENT TO EVERYTHING SAID OR DONE BY AUTHORITIES, BUT RATHER

IMPLIES LOYAL AND OPEN STATEMENT OF POINTS OF VIEW, LETTER ARGUES, CONCLUDING THAT MEASURE SHOULD BE ANNULLED.

3. BONILLA'S REPLY, DATED JUNE 21, REJECTS CATEGORICALLY AS INACCEPTABLE BOTH TERMINOLOGY AND SUBSTANCE OF AYLWIN LETTER AND TERMS AYLWIN'S ROLE IN MAKING PROTEST "EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES AND BY HIS STANDING AS PRESIDENT OF A PARTY IN RECESS." BONILLA REMINDS HIM THAT COUNTRY UNDER MILITARY GOVERNMENT IN STATE OF SIEGE AND INTERNAL WAR, THAT LAW GIVES AYLWIN LIMITED AUTHORITY TO ADMINISTER PROPERTY OF PARTY AND PROHIBITS USE OF RADIO BALMACEDA FOR BROADCASTING POLITICAL VIEWS OR ARROGATING TO HIMSELF REPRESENTATION OF CITIZENRY, AND THAT INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS ARE LIMITED BY REQUIREMENTS OF PUBLIC ORDER AS ALLOWED BY UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. LETTER DRAFTED WITH POLITICAL TONE VERY DIFFERENT FROM THAT USED IN PERSONAL CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN AYLWIN AND BONILLA, LATTER CONTINUES, AND THIS IS INTOLERABLE. BONILLA ENDS BY REQUESTING AYLWIN NOT TO WRITE AGAIN IN TERMS OTHER THAN THOSE OF AN ADMINISTRATOR OF A PARTY IN RECESS WHO ADDRESSES HIMSELF RESPECTFULLY TO NATION'S GOVT.

4. COMMENT. CERTAINLY DIDACTIC PREACHING WHICH CHARACTERIZES AYLWIN LETTER INVITED THIS KIND OF REPLY FROM GOVT. WE DO NOT YET KNOW WHY EXCHANGE WAS RELEASED AT THIS TIME AND INTEND TO LOOK INTO QUESTION, BUT RELEASE SUGGESTS THAT PARTY AND GOVERNING JUNTA HAVE EDGED CLOSER TO BRINK. WE HAVE REPORT FROM HIGHLY PLACED PARTY SOURCE THAT PDC CONSIDERING CLOSING DOWN STATION IN PROTEST AGAINST PRIOR CENSORSHIP AND MUZZLING OF CASTILLO. IF AUTHORITIES AWARE OF THIS POSSIBILITY, THEY MAY HAVE FOUND IT USEFUL TO SURFACE LETTER TEXTS BY WAY OF LAYING GROUNDWORK FOR JUSTIFYING THEMSELVES. CURIOUSLY, AYLWIN LETTER IS IN LARGE MEASURE IDENTICAL TO LETTER ON SAME SUBJECT SENT LAST MONTH BY CASTILLO TO BONILLA IN HIS OWN NAME.

5. SINCE DRAFTING PREVIOUS WE HAVE RECEIVED PRIVATELY TEXT OF REPLY FROM AYLWIN TO BONILLA DATED JULY 10, AS PART OF MIMEOGRAPH PACKAGE OF ALL THREE APPARNTLY BEING DISTRIBUTED BY PDC LEADERSHIP TO SOME MEMBERS. THIS DISTRIBUTION PRESUMABLY KNOWN TO GOC AND MAY WELL HAVE PLAYED ROLE IN DECISION TO MAKE RELEASE OF ABOVE. QUESTION THEN ARISES WHY THIRD LETTER NOT CONFIDENTIAL

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RELEASED BY GOC AND SUGGESTS GOC MAY PREFER AWAIT PREPARATION OF ITS OWN PART OF THIS SECOND ROUND. AYLWIN NOTES ON THREE OCCASIONS THEY TALKED BONILLA ASKED HIM TO BE FRANK, HENCE FRANKNESS OF HIS LETTER OF JUNE 12. HE TERMS BONILLA'S REPLY OFFENSIVE TO DIGNITY BOTH PERSONALLY AND TO PDC. AYLWIN STATES RESTRICTIONS ON ACTIVITIES ACCEPTED BY PDC DUE GRAVITY OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, BUT THAT THIS COMPREHENSION HAS RECEIVED SYSTEMATIC SUSPICION AS ITS ONLY RESPONSE. UNILATERAL IMPO-

SITION OF WILL BY GOVERNORS ON GOVERNED LED TO DOWNFALL OF
PREVIOUS REGIME AND TO REPEAT SAME MISTAKE IS TO IGNORE
HISTORICAL GENIUS OF CHILE, AYLWIN LETTER CONCLUDES. SOURCE
WHO GAVE US THIS THIRD LETTER REPORTS STRONG PDC CRITICISM
OF GOVERNING JUNTA IN ECONOMIC, LABOR AND LEGAL AREAS IN
PREPARATION AND MAY BE ISSUED AS EARLY AS NEXT WEEK, TO BE
SIGNED BY ALL FORMER PDC MEMBERS OF BOTH HOUSES OF CHILEAN
CONGRESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENSORSHIP, JUNTA, RADIO STATIONS, OPPOSITION PARTIES, PRESS RELEASES, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JUL 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GarlanWA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974SANTIA04194
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740191-0191
From: SANTIAGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740745/aaaabmfw.tel
Line Count: 124
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: SANTIAGO 3325
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GarlanWA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 SEP 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 SEP 2002 by boyleja>; APPROVED <25 MAR 2003 by GarlanWA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GOC-PDC EXCHANGE SURFACED
TAGS: PINT, PINS, ETEL, CI, PDC, (AYLWIN, PATRICIO), (BONILLA BRADANOVIC, OSCAR)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005